

The American Teacher

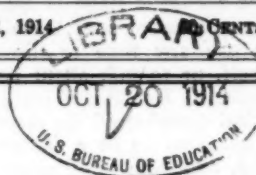
Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. III 8

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The Helping Hand

How can I best help the Children?

By making up my mind to Stop
Complaining

By thinking myself out of the Trivialities
of Machine Existence

By throwing the Weight of My Will
upon my Best Gifts, and taking a
Brand from a Flaming Ideal

By joining with my Fellows in the
Profession to make it Self-respect-
ing and Respected

RATING AND PROMOTION OF TEACHERS*

F ISABEL DAVENPORT

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I take it for granted that the subject of the rating of teachers and of what is known as the "superior merit plan" have passed the academic stage as far as our attitude is concerned, and I shall therefore not use any time to discuss the policy itself, or to talk about its meretricious effects. I shall deal instead with the practical question of the abolition of what is admitted to be a failure in its application, and both unpedagogical and unsocial in its essential nature.

Your committee on rating, promotion and salary has recently devoted considerable effort to learning the opinions and convictions of teachers, principals and other supervisors, especially of those with whom its members ordinarily do not come in contact. It is the result of this investigation which largely determines the trend and character of my talk here to-night.

Almost without exception every thoughtful, experienced person with whom we have talked, frankly recognizes and deprecates the evils attendant upon rating; but almost equally universal are such questions as, "How can the public and board of education be persuaded that teachers should not be rated?" "How can promotion be conducted without rating?" and "What shall we put in its place?"

Further questioning and analysis indicate that one of the chief difficulties which lie in the way of the entire abolition of the practise, is the fact that thru habit, rating and ratings have come to be confused with other issues in the thot of teachers and supervisors. That the minds of the men and women who compose the Board of Education are not so tainted by these associations, is our greatest hope for a speedy deliverance.

I

First there is the confounding of

*Talk before Teachers' League, New York, June 5, 1914.

technical rating with the general estimation which people everywhere form of each other's character and ability. Linked with this is the feeling already mentioned that somehow it will be difficult to persuade the public and the Board of Education that we should not be rated.

When we speak of rating we refer to the formal expression of a supervisor's opinion of a teacher by means of letters or other symbols or "marks"—these marks being recorded as the measure of the rated person's efficiency; with the possibility of their being used as determining factors in his future welfare. As far as I have been able to learn this practise, which has been fastened upon the schools of New York City, is almost an anomaly in normal adult society. In no other of the so-called learned professions, fields in which a premium is set upon scholarship and its application; nor in any of the industries and arts wherein skill and creative power are demanded; nor in any of the other social institutions devoted to human uplift and growth, is it believed that efficiency can be secured, or that skill and power and high moral and spiritual aims can be obtained, thru giving marks. Indeed any efficient man of affairs and the president of any board of education would blush, knowing himself to be weak and absurd, in resorting to the use of A's, B's, and C's to coerce good work from a poor stenographer, or as a reward and incentive to a good one.

I believe that it will not be over difficult for the Board of Education and the public at large to see that the maintaining of a practise so artificial necessitates a formalism that dehumanizes school work.

II

Another difficulty which we meet with is due to the confusing of rating with the testing and measuring of efficiency. The rating of teachers has no value for the testing, or for the expressing of efficiency. Efficiency along any line must

be measured in units of the work done. Thus a typist can write so many words a minute, a machine do so many foot-pounds of work; a man average so many bricks laid a day. The efficiency of a teacher must be measured by the number and strength of valuable habits formed in her pupils, by the power which she has developed in each child to get and apply facts, by the child's enlarged capacity and desire for social service, etc. No such standard of measurement yet exists.

Some attempt has been made to measure the teacher's efficiency by the number of pupils promoted, books read, or amount of subject matter covered. But everyone acquainted with school work knows how valueless these standards are as a real test of efficiency, and how demoralizing to a teacher when actually applied. There has been some gain along the line of working out standards for measuring the pupil's ability in certain of the more formal operations, but even this is a test of what the pupil can do when under certain conditions, and tells little or nothing of habits established. As yet anything like adequate standards for measuring the efficiency of the individual teacher in units of her most important work, are entirely lacking. When research workers in education succeed in finding us such standards, and we have learned to apply them, we shall hope to have the results expressed in the honorable terms of our labor and not in letters of the alphabet.

III

Another difficulty is due to the fact that in the thot of many rating is confused with promotion. That persons in all fields of activity are promoted without a system of ratings is evidence enough that there is no essential relation between the two. But keeping to the school system in this city, probably no one supposes that the more highly paid positions are filled on the basis of the ratings which the candidates have previously received. I have recently examined five different blanks which are sent to be filled out in order to obtain information

concerning candidates, but nowhere on these is there any inquiry concerning ratings. Principals state frankly that ratings are seldom considered in promotion, and teachers complain that while A's do not obtain, B's have been used to debar from advancement. Within our superior merit experience we know of cases where a majority of A's have not secured the fit and meritorious mark, while a majority of B's and B + 's have been rewarded with declaration of superior merit and maximum salary.

I do not wish to be understood as criticising adversely the fact that there is so little relation between ratings and promotion in our school system. I wish merely to point out that even those who give ratings, have no confidence in them as a basis for promotion, and that one of the chief reasons given for continuing the practise has little if any foundation in fact.

The question of promotion is a problem by itself, and we do not have to solve it in order to abolish ratings. But as we have been asked to say something along this line, we must say that the whole theory and practise of promotion in our schools rests upon a false conception of education, a conception which, on the one hand, places almost any activity which a qualified teacher may be called upon to perform above the actual work of teaching; and which, on the other, ranks teaching of subject matter to children whose mental and physical habits are for the most part formed, as of more importance than the work of establishing valuable habits most of which, if they are to be established at all, must become fixed during the first years of school life.

This reversal of educational values has resulted, especially in the high and training schools, in an unfortunate system of superior and subordinate positions, with large differences in salary, among teachers having practically the same qualifications and teaching the same subject. The teacher appointed first assistant supervises his fellows, and does such other work as he may be called upon by the

principal to do, such as taking charge of the attendance, looking after the heating apparatus or making out programs, etc., the number of hours of teaching he does being lessened accordingly. But whatever the nature of the extra class activity may be, promotion consists primarily in one of the teachers of a given subject being made the permanent head and supervisor of the others, of being relieved to a greater or less degree, as the case may be, of the real work of education, and of receiving therefor five hundred dollars a year more salary. In some cases in the training schools, (I do not know whether the same condition exists in any of the high schools) there are departments consisting of but two and three teachers, one of whom, as head of the department, receives seven hundred and fifty dollars a year extra salary.

Under such conditions the problems of promotion are serious, and much ill feeling is engendered which the practise of rating serves to augment. The solution of the problem here is thru the elimination of the position, and salary of the first assistant, and in substituting the practise of electing a department chairman who shall serve a certain length of time, say a term or a year, without extra pay. His hours of teaching could be lessened to give time for the added duties of chairman. This plan would save the city over one hundred, perhaps two hundred thousand dollars a year, would relieve the training and high schools of the caste system which now saps their vitality, and would release the tremendous fund of power which must be resident in the two thousand or more high and training school teachers, but which finds no adequate expression in the upbuild of the schools. Further, that may reveal other departments of the system where the same principle might be applied in solving the problem of promotions. But the first step is to get rid of ratings. It will then have been made possible to deal intelligently with the subject of promotion.

IV

But the question most frequently met

with in our investigation, is "what shall be put in the place of ratings?" Within the last two weeks I have talked with two superintendents. Each spoke frankly of the harmful effects of ratings. One was especially outspoken in declaring the practise of rating unpedagogical and pernicious, but when he was asked if he would join in an effort to have it abandoned, he said he would if anything could be found to take its place.

The pertinent question thus arises, *what is its place?*

Its place is not, as I have pointed out, to serve as a basis for promotion, or as a means of measuring or expressing efficiency. Its only excuse in the system is to serve as an instrument with which to deal with poor teachers, and as a means of securing conformity to what is euphemistically and vaguely termed "lawful authority," but which in actual practise becomes the will of the supervisor.

So the question resolves itself into first, What shall be put in the place of ratings as a means of dealing with poor teachers? and secondly, What shall be used in the place of the rating policy to secure conformity?

There is but one way to deal with poor teachers when their failure to do good work is due to lack in scholarship and ability or to permanent moral or physical weakness, and that is not to have them. There is a three-year probationary period before a teacher in the city schools is granted a permanent license. If poor teachers are being admitted into the system in any considerable numbers the supervisors, without whose recommendation they could not be admitted, are at fault, and should be held strictly to account. What is needed in the place of ratings here is good supervision.

But a flagrant cause of poor teaching is found in poor school conditions, such as too large classes, unsanitary buildings, and a militarism which weakens the mental and physical forces. In the place of ratings as a spur to enervated teachers, we need physical conditions that render health possible, and a conception of edu-

cation that makes teaching seem worth the while.

There is but one real purpose, which the practise of rating teachers can satisfactorily fulfil, and that is to secure conformity. The function of rating is essentially the function of the whip. Granting this to be its sole real use, there is nothing to put in its place. It is not a matter of substituting birch for hickory, but of cutting out flogging. All that has been said against the use of the rod as a means of controlling children is to be said against the use of marks to control teachers. In place of the whip in the hand of the teacher are needed scholarship, ability and a large regard for, and faith in, human personality; and on the side of the child a social environment that makes normal development possible. In place of the rating system in the hands of supervisors, there is needed first of all, well qualified teachers, and after that, plenty of means furnished for profes-

sional improvement, physical conditions favorable to good work, and, above all, opportunity for the exercise of the teacher's powers in the vital life of the school. This will not secure conformity primarily, but it will result in growth of professional ideals, in the development of the powers of both teachers and supervisors, and in the type of co-operation which is the cordial working together of all for the highest attainable ends, and this is what I understand to be the only aim of education which is compatible with American ideals.

In closing I wish to say that I have sufficient faith in the good judgment of the members of the Board of Education, and of its committee on by-laws to believe that these facts, properly brought before them, would find a response which would result, before long, in the entire abandonment of a policy which they would be bound to see is detrimental to the best interests of the schools.

THE DILEMMA OF THE TEACHERS' PAY

BENJAMIN C GRUENBERG

AT THE ANNUAL meeting of The National Education Association, resolutions were adopted endorsing the principle of paying teachers without discrimination as to sex. Altho some nine-tenths of the teachers in the country are women, and altho the character of the membership of the N E A has not changed materially in the last decade, this resolution could not have been adopted half a dozen years ago. While the growth of feminism may have influenced some of the opinions that contributed to this resolution, that movement on the whole was not a decisive element in the situation.

The resolution comes at the end of a series of agitations carried on in different parts of the country for the establishment of what has been called "equal pay for equal work." In New York City this principle of equal pay went in-

to practise in January, 1912. In his last annual report the City Superintendent of Schools in Cincinnati urged upon the Board of Education the desirability of adopting this idea as soon as possible. And elsewhere the idea is gradually becoming familiar to city officials and administrators, at least as a slogan.

The growth of the agitation and the decline of active opposition to the idea of paying women teachers the same salaries as are paid to men teachers mark the emergence of a new attitude toward our economic relations generally. They indicate that people are asking themselves the meaning of their wage or salary. And it is only natural that those workers who are by training and habit more given to asking questions than the rest of the community should be among the first to push this question forward into consciousness.

The simple cynic who distinguishes between a wage and a salary by saying that one is paid by the week and the other by the month has seen only the surface. There is a more fundamental difference, and one that involves serious difficulties when it comes to adjusting the size of a worker's pay. There is involved, indeed, the whole matter of the relation of pay to the value of services.

We have been accustomed for so long that the memory of no living man can recall to the contrary, to paying women lower wages than men receive for similar work, that the first reaction to the proposal to equalize the salaries of teachers was naturally enough the self-assured declaration that it could not be done—it was absurd on the face of it. Women never had received the same pay as men, and therefore they should not in the future. This reply was just as obvious as would be your answer to the proposal to equalize the incomes of all men, regardless of the kind of work they do. Men who do dirty work have always been paid less than those who do clean, attractive work, therefore they should continue to get less.

But as soon as men could catch their breaths they were prepared with a better answer—two of them in fact. The first is that it is contrary to the "law of supply and demand" to pay women as much as men. The second one calls attention to the fact that in general men have others dependent upon them, whereas the women workers do not as a rule; and that therefore men are *morally* entitled to higher rates of compensation. A little that will convince us, however, that these attempts to place the issue on the lofty plane of law and morals was but a bit of pedantry into which we are all apt to slip when placed in the argumentative attitude.

For the statement that the law of supply and demand *requires* women to be paid less than men is simply another way of saying that in the labor market women have been cheaper than men. It is a rather dim recognition of the fact that under existing economic conditions

the wage bears no relation to the cost of living on the one hand, or to the human or social value of the product on the other. We are pushed about in the labor market, now going up, now down, our momentary level determined by such irrelevant factors as a new design by a French costumer and a patent decision by the court. It is in its form of an attack upon the agitation for "equal pay" an aggressive claim to an implied right; it is in substance, however, a weak concession to those who pay wages, an admission that these have the right—because they have the power—to pay just as little as they need, or just as much as they must.

The second formal reply at once explains the first, and then shifts the issue. For one of the reasons why women are cheaper in the market than men is this very fact that the man's wage is—or in the past has been—generally the family wage, whereas the woman's wage has generally been an individual wage. But whereas the acceptance of the law of supply and demand seemed necessary to the opponents of the "equal pay" agitation, it is at once repudiated in the attempt to make the opposition stronger. For in claiming that men have a moral right to higher pay because of their greater responsibilities we discard the market standards and adopt one based solely on the needs of the workers and their dependents. Surely, those who adopt this line of argument prove too much.

Suppose you object to equal pay on the ground of the economic law of supply and demand. If then the women formed a sufficiently powerful union and held out for "equal pay," it would be right enough for them to get it, altho we should recognize that they would be receiving a monopoly wage. On the other hand, suppose that you object to equal pay on the ground that men, having greater responsibilities, are entitled to higher rates of compensation. In that case, would you agree to scaling the pay of public employes on the basis of the size of family? For if the spinster lady,

doing what is acknowledged to be the equivalent of my work, but having no one dependent upon her, while I have a wife and a handful of children dependent upon me, is not allowed by right to receive the same pay as I get, am I not entitled to an additional bonus over what Smith is getting, who is not married at all, and is a jolly good sport?

Thus we may see that the opposition to equal pay on the ground of market conditions simply accepts what has been as what ought to be; whereas the opposition on the ground of different social responsibility despite equivalence of service repudiates the market methods of determining pay and accepts the principle of paying each according to his needs.

But how is it with those who approve the idea of equal pay? There are first of all those who accept the idea because the formula sounds essentially right—how can anyone claim “unequal pay for equal work?” Most of these people do not ask themselves the question as to what is meant by equal work. It would not be difficult to show, as has indeed been claimed by the opponents, that there never is absolute equality of service in the business of teaching. This is however without significance; for if it is true that the work of women is never identical with the work of men in teaching, it is equally true that no two men do identical work, and yet they would claim pay according to a uniform scale. The important point is that in certain occupations the value of the service is not to be measured by hours or by material units of product. In teaching the value of service varies with experience and devotion and enthusiasm and energy and scholarship and maturity of thought and outlook—a hundred immaterial factors that cannot be weighed or counted or measured, but that do nevertheless make the services of one teacher highly valuable to the community while the services of another are indifferent or worse. Under these circumstances it is out of the question to speak of equal pay for equal work, for there is no equal work. But the inequality is independent of the sex

of the teacher, so that the only claim which the reformer can make is that the determination of salaries shall not be influenced by the sex of the incumbent, which, from an abstract point of view, is certainly just.

To the objection that the disregarding of sex is in violation of the economic law of supply and demand, many teachers make the sufficient answer that the recognition of a principle of justice is more important than the compliance with a rule of the market-place. We know of course that this so-called “law” is more than a rule of the market-place; it is a real and active force in determining the level of prices and wages. What the attitude of these teachers and their protagonists really means is that the determination of these rates of pay should be removed from the competitive field in which alone the law of supply and demand has any validity. In other words, like those who oppose equal pay, they would seek a new principle for determining rates of pay for service. They would make the rate rest on some objective standard of social value of service, whereas their opponents would have it rest on some subjective standard of the needs of the individual worker—or of classes of workers.

So long as we continue to do as we have always done, we may live without theory and unhampered by the pale cast of thot. But when a new line of action is proposed we are at once forced to scratch our heads and stimulate the gray matter to activity, and this whether we accept the new proposal or repudiate it entirely. And here we have the interesting situation of groups of people who are diametrically opposed to each other on the subject of equal pay approaching each other unawares by way of the back stairs.

For what is implied by the rejection of the supply-and-demand system of fixing pay?

Supply and demand rule the rates of wages where men and women have labor-power to sell in the “open market.” This view assumes a certain fluidity and mobil-

ity of labor which in fact is never realized; but never mind, the point is that wages have nothing to do directly with the cost of up-keep of the laborer—as witness the thousands of workers engaged in the so-called “parasitic” industries—and they have nothing to do directly with the social utility of their services—as witness the thousands of workers engaged in industries that are positively harmful to the workers themselves as well as to society at large.

When we once begin to raise questions as to the human cost of keeping a worker in condition to continue his work, we say that the cashier ought to be relieved of any apprehension as to the future of his family, he ought to be free to devote himself to his work without being obliged to press his own trousers or carry a dinner pail—and presto! we put him on a salary. That is, when we are confronted with the necessity of keeping a worker on a rather high level of efficiency, we subsidize him to attend to the business in question, and insure him and his family against his being thrown out on a week's notice—or on no notice at all, as happens to ordinary wage-earners—and we insure him also that so long as he attends to business, he and his family will continue to be fairly comfortable, so far as the material conditions of life are concerned. In other words, we place him on a salary. We do not ask, How cheap a man can we get to do this work? We ask, What does it cost to support a man in such a station?

The adoption of the principle of equal pay is virtually a shifting from the wage basis of compensating teachers to the salary basis. It is true that in all the larger cities the teachers have been nominally on a salary basis for many years. It is now only in the smallest communities that the trustees bargain with the candidate as to the amount of money she is to get for keeping school next year. But the salaries of teachers in most cities have been for the most part salaries in form only. Essentially they have been amounts paid on a scale determined not by considerations of what it costs to

maintain efficient men and women for certain kinds of public service, but on the consideration of what we must pay per month or per day, to get enough fairly acceptable men and women to take these jobs.

The difference may be brought out by showing the different attitude toward the public service that is implied by each of these methods.

We may conceive of the relation between the state and the public school teacher in this fashion: The state is engaged in a certain enterprise (namely the training of its future citizenry) that requires the services of so many thousand men and women; this involves the payment of moneys from the public treasury; what is the smallest sum of money for which we can get men and women to fill these jobs?

The other relationship may be expressed somewhat thus: The state is engaged in a certain enterprise that requires the services of thousands of men and women, who must, by virtue of this service, withdraw from the usual commercial and industrial enterprises through which people support themselves; now what does it cost to support the kinds of men and women we need in this business, with their families?

We may note that the reciprocal of the first point of view may read, “I need a job; I can get one working for the state at so much per year; I need the money and will take this job, and get what I can out of it.”

The reciprocal of the second point of view may read, “I would like to be a teacher, but there is no money in it. If I was sure I could meet all my necessary expenses—and my family's—I would take that job, and put all I can into it.”

It is not to be supposed that raising the salaries of teachers, or equalizing the salaries of teachers, will have the immediate effect of changing the attitude of the teachers in service from that suggested in the first of the above points

(Continued on page 126.)

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This paper seeks to advance the status of the teacher to the dignity and the influence of a profession, by advocating high standards of admission to the calling; by urging an extension of the opportunities for the participation of teachers in the direction of educational affairs; and by supporting the organization of teachers for all legitimate professional purposes.

TAKE THE BETTER JOB

IF YOU FEEL that your work has not been appreciated, and that near the end of a long career of sacrifice and devotion you have had the stone-cold cheek of indifference turned toward your aspirations for approval and recognition, you may say in your disgust, "I am done with the whole infamous and heartless business. Hereafter I shall do as little as

I possibly can do, and still hold the job against the day of final dissolution. They will get nothing more from me."

Who are they? Is it for the educational masters that you have been working? If so, quit now!

Begin over, and give the best of your remaining strength to a big ideal.

SCHOOL COUNCILS

ANY EXPERIMENT in democracy is liable to suffer from the inexperience of its promoters. But no matter.

The school council idea is a feasible plan for getting the teachers to share in the government of the school. No more practical way has been suggested. Altho feasible and practical, the project of assured success in this movement lies most likely in the direction of working out a method of approach; in other words, we must develop workable tactics.

It has been a mistake for over-enthusiastic promoters of democracy in education to try to wrest from the principals of the schools the authority which the system of schools has given them. In return for the authority given the principals, there is a definite responsibility imposed. It would be a one-sided matter if the school council should possess itself of the authority, while leaving to the principal the responsibility.

We should not forget that great numbers of teachers do not care for authority at all. The success of the democratic movement depends upon the indifferent majority no less than upon the aggressive minority, for democracy brings its benefits to all with the aid and understanding of all. Therefore, a practical appeal must be found which will draw the sympathy of a large number of teachers. This appeal may be made thru a call for *coöperation*. The call in each school should be made with entire sincerity. If this is done no sane principal should want to withstand, or could withstand, the pressure of the common desire for better administration and better spirit in the school.

It may happen that a small number of

teachers enamored of the ancient forms of boss rule will go out of their way to embarrass the bearers of the democratic standard. To quiet these disturbers it is only necessary to produce a few concrete benefits as fruits of the coöperative idea. This is far better than entering into a controversy, and the council saves its energy for more productive work.

A third feature in a well-worked-out plan of action is one that has a valuable educational character. For a time many trivial suggestions may come to the council from the teachers. Some of these suggestions may spring from old sources of irritation in the principal's management of the school. If the council gives its time to working over these trivial matters, rubbing off only the crudest of the exterior before laying the complaints before the teaching body for consideration, the council will fall in short order. But if the trivialities are mentioned in frequent repetition, there is something fundamentally wrong with the administration. This is what the council should go after with deliberation but with courage, for the social power of the school is in jeopardy. If the council insists upon the teachers bringing to its attention matters of fundamental importance, then in time it will get fundamental thinking. That is where the education will come in.

More experimenting with the school council idea and more thinking about it will bring still greater assurance of success for this new piece of democratic machinery.

The craft spirit will insist that its own trained and expert judgment shall establish craft standards of excellence and efficiency. It will resent the unwarranted interference of laymen in purely technical matters. It will resent such interference manfully and vigorously as would a reputable physician, a reputable artist, or a reputable engineer in a similar situation.—
WILLIAM C BAGLEY, in *Classroom Management*.

GOOD PEDAGOGY

NOTWITHSTANDING the absurdities that have been committed in the name of "pedagogy," the technique of teaching has made wonderful advances in the last quarter century. In no direction has this advance been more marked than in the almost universal recognition of the principle that children learn to do by doing. So convincingly has this principle been demonstrated over and over again, that even the older educators are coming to urge upon teachers the substitution of experience and practise for the memorizing of precepts and rules. It is very gratifying to find that Superintendent Maxwell of New York City urges upon the principals that they give the pupils the opportunity to learn the arts of democracy thru actual experience with the problems of self-government. In his annual address he placed before them the following, with unusual emphasis:

In order that pupils may have actual experience in governing themselves they should be given some responsibility and some opportunity for self-government by allowing them to manage or take an active part in managing the discipline of the school, the recitation, their own clubs, games, playgrounds, fire drills, opening exercises, entertainments, excursions, class and school libraries, athletic contests or class savings banks.

Pupils should be made to feel their responsibility by being made responsible for something in the preservation of school property, in the tidiness of school premises and school rooms, and thereby learn that mutual assistance and co-operative service are the fundamental principles of all healthy self-government.

Pupils should be led to see that without law, liberty itself is impossible; that infractions of the law are injurious to the people individually and collectively, and that is the duty of each citizen, young or old, to aid in the enforcement of the law. "Good laws, good administration, and the perpetuity of the government itself depend upon the manner in which the people discharge their public duties."

To be sure, he says nothing about the older children who act as teachers learning the principles of government thru participation in government. He seems to assume that teachers, trained as they are for dealing in formulas and abstractions, can learn all there is to know about government from the printed page. In time the superintendents and the commissioners of education, and the public at large, will learn that teachers are very much like other human beings, and can learn thru doing. Then teachers will either be given the ballot and urged to take part in public affairs, or they will be given a responsible share in the management of their professional affairs—or they will be forever enjoined from teaching "government" to the children. That task will be reserved for the professional politicians.

In the meanwhile, let us be grateful for every bit of progress.

WAR AND EMPTINESS

OUR INDUSTRIAL civilization ought to make war impossible because of the close interrelations of material interests of the various nations, because of the close economic interdependence of the various nations, because of the opportunities for better mutual understanding, because of the tremendous costliness of a suspension of industry. Yet it is our very industry that has made the present war possible. The economists have told us of the struggle for world markets and concessions and of the "spheres of influence" and trade routes. But apart from all these things, the fighting is done by men and women who really ought to know better. In spite of the high development of humanitarian sentiments, in spite of the keen appreciation of the suffering and misery and waste that war entails, and in spite of the prevailing ignorance among the masses of people concerning the economic and political forces that drive governments to declare war, the monotony and tedium of the common

life force men to seek distraction and excitement wherever they can be found—and there is nothing more exciting or distracting than war. The picture of the Belgian girl smiling while surrounded by the German "foes" need not mean any more than the natural acceptance of an opportunity for novel experiences, for real adventure, in a humdrum existence.

If we should all follow the counsel of Tolstoi and refuse to fight, there could of course be no war. But we cannot follow the counsel of Tolstoi. Aside from all other considerations, the human animal retains so much of the elemental restlessness of protoplasm that it can not be happy in the absence of stimulation and action. If we can not go out to shoot the rapids or kill big game, we must get the excitement by proxy thru books or moving pictures. If we can not wander far from home in search of the heroic and romantic, we must enjoy life vicariously thru the heroes of fiction and the stage. The quest of the unknown, the excitement of danger, are just as necessary for human happiness as protection against the weather and the quenching of thirst.

Without in any way disparaging the sincere patriotism or the outraged sense of righteousness that move many of those who rush into the battling regiments, we must recognize that the most wide-spread and the most deep-seated motives lie in the restlessness and the craving for adventure that we have inherited from our migrant ancestors. These instincts must find an outlet; if not in the activities of peace, then in war.

We must continue to teach the iniquity of war, its wastes, its manifold miseries, its ultimate futility. We must teach an appreciation of human values, a regard for life and for its possibilities. But we must also teach that human life is more than pig life, we must teach the rising generation to demand an existence that is so full of action and color that it will leave no room or time for envies and quarrels. We must teach it to regard human life as too sacred to be exposed to arrogance and exploitation on the one

hand, or to drab dullness on the other. And finally we must teach that all wars are from Hell except the war for human rights: God is for mankind, not for a nation. When the children will have learned to demand life in its fullness, adults will refuse to accept the emptiness of mechanical routine or the desolations of war.

DANGEROUS SPORT

THOSE WHO play foot-ball or polo assume certain risks; but the danger in these sports is practically all for the participants. Those, however, who play fast and loose with our laws are endangering the stability of our institutions, and something should be done to stop the frivolity with which the legal profession, with its official head in the courts, manipulates the fortunes of a whole people.

Everyone who has been weaned from press-made opinion recognizes that the courts with their "officers"—the lawyers—are only incidentally concerned with justice. Primarily they are concerned with translating statements and allegations into conclusions and decisions according to a certain set of very complex rules. On the assumption that these rules are so constructed that decisions evolved in harmony with them must necessarily secure justice, the work of the courts is of course identical with the establishment of justice. But when we consider on the one hand the formalism and rigidity of legal procedure, and on the other hand the frequency with which court decisions in strict accordance with the law are nevertheless substantially unjust, we cannot avoid the suspicion that there is something fundamentally wrong with the administration of "justice."

However, this is in itself no serious matter. Legal injustice is so small a part of the total of injustice that while we should do well to eliminate it, we can still bear the burden. So long as the game is played on bewildered business men who can shrug their shoulders and say "Better luck next time," it does not seem to matter much that injustice is

done. So long as the wage worker is mulcted of his hard-earned cash, it may be possible to assure him that his is an individual case, and the lawyers may continue to laugh in their sleeves. So long as tenants may be ruthlessly evicted in accordance with the "law," a few disreputable and inconsequential people may become embittered; but that is not serious.

A real danger appears when teachers—common or garden variety of school teachers—come to have direct personal experiences with the workings of the law. The teacher has a way of generalizing from very few facts. She has also a way of arousing in her pupils reflections of her own feelings. She cannot be silenced with the assurance that justice is a matter of getting the right lawyer. She cannot be put off with the encouraging hope that she may have better luck next time. Her prejudice for righteousness cannot be outraged with impunity. To trifle with teachers in the matter of the law is an extremely dangerous thing.

But this trifling has commenced. Commissioners of education who are also lawyers have told teachers who had absented themselves from school when they had to give birth to a child that in absenting themselves without leave they were violating the law and were therefore subjecting themselves to dismissal—for violating the law. When women teachers have asked for leave of absence for the purpose of bearing a child, leave was refused. Lawyers have told us, in other words, that it is unlawful for a pregnant woman to stay at home at the time of child-birth. They have not gone so far as to say that it is unlawful for a woman teacher to be pregnant; they have not been called upon to decide that question—technically. They say that a woman teacher may be pregnant, or not, as she chooses; that is none of their concern. But she must not stay away from school without permission: that is their concern, and they mean to uphold the sacredness of the law at all hazards.

The case of Mrs. Bridget Peixotto, a

teacher in the New York public schools who was dismissed technically for "neglect of duty" in being absent from school without permission, but in reality for presuming to become a mother without permission of the Board of Education, has just been "decided" by the Court of Appeals. Mrs Peixotto had brot suit, after her dismissal, for reinstatement. The mandamus upon which she was reinstated was upheld by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. The Board of Education appealed to the Court of Appeals, and the earlier decision was reversed. A minority opinion of the court sets forth the importance of determining the general principle involved in the case—that is, two of the judges thot that they were called upon to render decision on the "merits of the case." The majority, however, (presumably more experienced lawyers) considered it the duty of the court to decide the "legal" questions involved, and acted accordingly. "Legally"—that is, technically—the decision means that Mrs Peixotto committed a grave error in going to the court instead of going to the State Commissioner of Education for reinstatement or for redress of grievances. And that is absolutely all that it means. A year of litigation and expense and mental discomfort, not to say distress, for the purpose of finding out that when a teacher is dismissed by a board of education for "neglect of duty" it is her business to go to the State Commissioner instead of going to the court. It does not matter that at the time there was no State Commissioner; it does not matter that the new Commissioner, appointed months after his predecessor had died, left for Europe shortly after his appointment. The mountain labored, in several waves of effort, and brot forth the valuable principle that a teacher has no business going to court.

But there is more wisdom in this decision than the honorable judges suspected. The practical effect of the decision should be to discourage teachers from going to court. A person with only a fraction of an eye can see what would

happen if teachers went to court in considerable numbers and received technical decisions. There would result in a dozen or fifteen years such a revulsion of popular feeling against the courts and their decisions, there would result such a vast contempt for the law and for its officers that the foundations of our government would be shaken and shaken to their utter destruction. You may play cat and mouse with tenants or hoboes; you may defraud workingmen and shop keepers; you may brow-beat the messengers of new gospels. But you cannot—safely—let teachers acquire contempt and loathing for the law and for its administration.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

IN REPLY to a questionnaire sent out by the Division of Reference and Research of the New York City Department of Education, information was obtained from sixteen cities concerning leave of absence granted to teachers, without pay. The question was: *Are teachers granted a leave of absence without pay for purposes of study or restoration of health? If so (a) what is the period for study? (b) what is the period for the restoration of health?*

All the cities that answered grant leave of absence for the purpose of study or the restoration of health, without pay. In the following cities one year is allowed either for study or for restoration of health, without pay: Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh. In New Orleans and in Indianapolis the time is indefinite, and may be a year or more. In Newark it is two years, and this may be extended by decision of the Board. In Baltimore leave of absence either for study or for restoration of health may be secured only by special action of the Board, and only to the end of the school year.

For purposes of study, one year without pay is allowed by Chicago, Cleveland and Los Angeles; in the latter two cities the leave may be renewed. In Buffalo, any time may be taken, without

pay; but if a teacher remains away two years it is assumed that he has resigned.

For purposes of restoring health, Chicago allows five months without pay, Cleveland two years (which may be renewed, if the teacher is not sufficiently renovated) and Los Angeles, Rochester and Providence grant indefinite leave. In Buffalo the teacher is absent without pay "at the discretion of the Superintendent."

Boston, Louisville and Rochester make provision for paying teachers on leave.

In Boston a teacher may be granted leave of absence for a period not exceeding one year, for purposes of study and travel, every eighth year of service, with a deduction of 1/400th part of the annual salary for each day absent. This is half pay for a year for each seven years of service. In case of absence for "rest" or restoration of health, the same deductions are made, for a period not exceeding one year; but this condition applies only after twenty years of service.

In Rochester a teacher may obtain leave of absence on half pay for one year, for purposes of study. In Louisville, "if a teacher has been employed in the public schools for a number of years, she may have a leave of absence for five months, with one-fourth salary, in the event she is in poor health."

THE DILEMMA OF THE TEACHERS' PAY

(Continued from page 120.)

of view to that expressed in the second. All that may be expected is that with the new point of view on the part of the community that employs teachers, we shall be in a position to ask for and to get men and women who are able and willing to devote themselves to the public service on a salary basis in larger and larger proportions; and that gradually the wage-workers who are now in the business may be eliminated.

It is doubtful whether teachers generally are coming around to the conscious distinction between a wage and a salary implied in this discussion. But it is cer-

tain that the leaders of that among the teachers have been decidedly dissatisfied with the economic status of the calling and have been working hard to make both their colleagues and the public see that a change is urgently needed—for the benefit of the public no less than for the benefit of those engaged in this line of work.

But this feeling among the leaders in the teaching profession is but typical of the feeling among thousands of other men and women in all kinds of occupation,—the feeling, namely, that the market-place method of determining the status of the worker and of his family is not a satisfactory one—for the workers and their families. That it is not sound in theory and not fair in practise has been recognized by a few employers here and there who speak of the "economy of the high wage." But what is needed is not a high wage, altho of course a high wage is better than a low wage; what is needed is a machinery for distributing the national income on a basis that takes cognizance of human needs and of the value of human services. This the wage system has never done; this the salary system only approaches.

It is significant and encouraging that the teachers of the nation, as represented at the N E A convention, have taken so decisive a step in the repudiation of the wage view of life and labor. It is encouraging and significant in more ways than one. Teachers are traditionally the transmitters to the future of the accomplished fact, but today they aspire to be in the position of leaders to show the way to their fellow men—the new way. That is the most significant and the most encouraging event of the year.

Unfortunately, we have the quack in medicine, the shyster in law, the jerry builder in engineering and the theologaster in the ministry. What is the corresponding term for the pedagog-for-pelf whose presence in the schools is a disgrace to the profession and a danger to the community?

BOOK NOTES

All books may be ordered from
THE AMERICAN TEACHER

AN EXCELLENT brief statement of the place of *Industrial Education in the Elementary School*, from the point of view of a democracy, is presented in the *Riverside Educational Monographs* by Dr Percival R Cole, of the Sydney (Australia) Teachers' College. In an hour's reading we make a quick survey of the social ideals back of the educational systems of various peoples, review the modern conditions in industry and society that gave rise to the present problems in education, discover the necessity for reconstructing the school curriculum and the school methods, and find the relation of the *subject* of Industry to this reconstruction. This little book can be highly commended to every public school teacher, no matter what the special subject of interest may be. (Houghton Mifflin Co. 35 cents.)

The perplexities that arise from a multiplicity of counsel often make the young teacher despair of ever seeing clearly the one right way of doing things. Professor Chas A McMurray, Director of the Training Department in the Northern Illinois State Normal School, has gathered a large number of conflicting doctrines in pedagogy, and has analyzed these with a view to finding—not the true alternative from each pair—but the transcendent point of view that is capable of reconciling the apparent antagonisms. And the result is an unusually helpful little book for the teacher that really tries to understand what he is doing. The book is divided into two parts, the first dealing with dualisms in school discipline and instruction, the second with opposing elements in general educational problems and theories. If a thoughtful reading of the book would only make us somewhat less dogmatic in our convictions, somewhat more tolerant of opposing views, it would be worth all the time it costs, and the price of the book thrown in. (*Conflicting Principles in Teaching and How to Adjust Them*, Houghton Mifflin Co. \$1.)

To help us distinguish between neurological clinics, mental tests and school inspection on the one hand, and psycho-educational clinics on the other, has been a part of Dr Wallin's task for several years. Nineteen of his addresses and studies have been gathered into a single volume entitled *The Mental Health of the School Child*, and provided with a good index. As psychological studies accumulate, the application of psychological principles becomes more certain, but only to the extent that the studies are checked in a quantitative manner. Part of Mr Wallin's work has been the critical examination of Binet-Simon tests, and of other methods of examination. The application of psychological analysis to the planning of special educational processes for exceptional children and eventually for each individual child is the great task before the educational clinician. This book should be of special interest to supervisory officers and to those who have to deal directly with the organization of schools and school systems. (Yale University Press. \$2.)

The first duty of the teacher is to expand and enlarge his own limited personality so as to take in and appreciate the rich variety of character with which the boys and girls surround him. It is his one chance to grow into the larger and richer life which his duties demand. If he can wake up to the situation and crawl out of his narrower self into a broader sympathy, he will soon discover, in any school, children who have higher forms of ability. This is his best chance to build out and fortify the weaker, neglected spots in his own character. The teacher is, of necessity, limited in his knowledge, but he should be sympathetically open to all phases and peculiarities of human nature. He is under obligation to encourage every child to a free and full development of the best points in his own character.—CHARLES A McMURRAY, in *Conflicting Principles in Teaching*.

Slaves beg favors. Men assert rights.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

We are the dead, sprung fresh,
A thousand times at your call.
We are the quick, whose flesh
You have builded into your wall.

Not as your soldiers die,
Have we poured life's votive stream;
We have given it, sigh by sigh,
We have given it, dream by dream.

We have given the hope that dies,
When the last of youth departs;
We have given the light of our eyes,
And the song that lived in our hearts.

Our hands to the task are true,
Though our hearts, at length, are dead.
We have given our souls to you;
O City, give us our bread!

M M in *The Masses*, October, 1914.

The survey of the Springfield (Ill) school system, conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation under the direction of Dr Leonard P Ayres, showed that the average length of service of all the teachers in the system is seven years. This is an unusually stable teaching force, but about two-thirds of the teachers received their training in the local schools.

CHEER UP!

No teacher can teach a good school unless she is living a happy normal life. If she is constantly bent under the load of her daily program, if she is bored and annoyed by the dull, coarse community into which a cruel fate has thrown her, she can never be a big, whole-souled teacher. While school teaching must be the main thing, it is well for us to lose it occasionally in order that we may find it bigger and better. The teacher who can have a good time, ought to have a good school, and her pupils ought to get something out of it over and above "reading and writing and 'rithmetic."—State Superintendent F G BLAIR of Illinois, in *Monthly Letter* for September.

ONE KIND OF REGULATION

The purpose of these regulations is in no sense to hamper the individuality of any teacher or pupil of the school. Order and regularity are, however, necessary for efficiency. There are many ways, equally good, of doing the same thing, but in an organization as large as this school, uniformity of practise is indispensable, and it is with the purpose of creating such uniformity that these regulations are published.

Every one of these regulations is subject to change; many of them are issued tentatively. Every teacher is urged to bring to the attention of the principal any change in regulation that will be beneficial to the school. Any regulation which does not meet with the approval of a majority of the teachers will be rescinded at once; but so long as a regulation is in operation, teachers are urged to co-operate with all their power in seeing that it is strictly carried out.

The principal's office is open to teachers and to pupils at all times.

It is assumed from the beginning that the school is a democratic institution; that, as far as possible, the voice of each individual connected with it shall be heard and the opinion of each respected. The principal is merely the head of the school, not its master.

The will of the school should be expressed thru the person of its official representative.—ARTHUR M WOLFSON, in Preface to "General Regulations, Julia Richman High School," New York.

A correspondent writes to *The New York Mail* to ask "Don't you think the time's ripe for the teaching of humanitarianism, not patriotism, in our public schools?" The editor prints the question, but not the answer. The wise editor knows his place. This question is to be answered by the teachers themselves.

Have you that over the reasons for shortening the summer vacation?

In the long vacation have you been able to drop a few of the burdens of mind you gathered up during the year? Or have you fastened them on more firmly?